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# A SERMON OF Reformation.

Preached at the Church of the  
SAVOY, last Fast day, July 27,  
1643.

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By *Thomas Fuller B.D.*  
and Minister there.

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# A SERMON O F REFORMATION.

HEB. 9. 10.

*Vntill the time of Reformation.*

**T**hose who live beyond the Polar circles, are called *Peregrini*, because they have shadows round about them. In a more mysticall meaning the Jewes before Christ may be so called, living in constant Umbrages of Types and Ceremonies which were taken away when the Sunne of Righteousnesse did arise. Their sacrificing of Lambes and Rammes, and Kids and Goats, and Calves, and Kine, and Turtle-doves, with their observing of Meates and Drinke, and Dayes, whereas the Apostle saith, Colos. 2.17. *A shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.*

Yet, in some sense I may flesly say, that the very *Sacrifice* and *Saintly Sacrifice*, was still but the outward Aitire,

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as containing therein such Types, as related to a higher and holier truth : To instance only in the Holy of Holies, herein were seven sacred Utensils, all full fraught with Heavenly Mysteries.

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First, the Golden Censor, signifying our prayers mingled with Christs merits (woefull for us if he did not give better Incense then we bring) which he offers up for us to his Father. Secondly, *The Arke of the Covenant overlaid round about with gold*; whilst *Shittim wood*, was in the middest thereof, to Typifie Christs humanity decked and adorned with his Godhead. Thirdly, *the Pot of Manna*, looking backwards in memoriall of the miraculous meat of the Israelites in the Wildernesle : And forwards to set forth Angels food in Heaven, which is neither to eat nor to drinke, but to doe Gods will, and to see Gods glory. Fourthly, *Aarons Rod* which budded, and besides the History contained therein, alluded to Christs Resurrection, that *Branch of Jesse* cut downe and cast out amongst the dead : which yet afterwards did revive, flourish, and fructifie. Fifthly, *The Tables of the Covenant*, wherein the Commandements were written by Gods finger, to intimate, that only an infinite power can effectually print Gods Lawes in our hard and obdurate hearts. Sixthly, the golden Cherubims overshadowing the Mercy-Seat with their wings, and looking towards it; to shew, that the mystery of Gods mercy is to be covered from the curiosity of prophaney eyes, whilst the pious may with comfort behold it. Seventhly, and lastly, *the Mercy-Seat it selfe*; the Embleme of that Mercy-Seat in Heaven, to which poore penitents being cast at the Barre of Gods justice have a free and open appeale.

4.

All these were of gold and pure gold, and yet Saint Paul (*Gal.4.9.*) calleth all legall ceremonies *beggarly Elements*, in comparison of Christ the Truth, in whom these did determine and expire : As the rude lines of Black-Lead wherewith the Picture is first drawne, vanish away when the curious

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rious Limner layeth on the lively colours ; so that all these outward Ordinances had an end at the comming of Christ, being only to last, *Untill the time of Reformation.*

The Text is so short ; it needs not to be divided, only the word REFORMATION must bee expounded ; a word long in pronouncing and longer in performing, as generally signifying the bettering, and amending of what is amisse ; In Greeke Αρεντα, A Throngh Rectifying. However, sometimes the word Reformation is not opposed to things bad in their owne nature, but to things that are lesse perfect, and may be more perfected, as in the Text. For the Ceremoniall law of the Jewes was compleat in its kinde, as given of God, and every thing made by Him, must be like Him that made it very good. Yet comparatively that law was imperfect, and needed a Reformation, which was performed at Christs comming. Besides, though the Ceremoniall Law was good in it selfe, yet it was bad as it was abused by the ignorant Jewes. For though the knowing Patriarks looked through, and beyond the Types to the Meissias himselfe : yet the dull People mistaking the Shell for the Kernal, and the Casket for the Jewell ; lodged their soules where they shoule only have bayted, and did dote on the shadowes as on the substance it selfe ; in which respect the Peoples judgements, as well as those Ceremonies, needed a Reformation.

The maine point we shall insist on, is this ; That Christians living under the Gospel, live in a time of Reformation, which will appeare in severall particulars : For besides Ceremonies removed according to the principall intent of the Text ; Manners are now reformed and Doctrine refined : Poligamy connived at in the Patriarks, now generally condemned, the Bill of Divorce cancelled by Christianity, which was permitted to the Jewes, not because that was good, but because they were bad, and by this Tolleration were kept from being worse. The second Ta-

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ble abused by the restrictive Comments of the Pharisees, confining those Lawes ( which were made to confine them ) onely to the outward Act , are now according to our Saviour interpretation extended to their true demeriton . The mistery of the Trinity clouded in the old Testament , is cleared in the New . The Doctrine of Gods righteousnesse by faith , of the merit of Christ , of the spirit of Adoption , of the Resurrection of the Body , darkly delivered under the Law are manifested in the Gospel , with many other heavenly Revelations .

7.  
Vse.

Let us be hartily thankfull to God , who gave us to be borne since the comming of Christ in the time of Reformation . Our Twi-light is clearer then the Jewish Noonday : The men of China use to brag , that they ( because of their ingenious civility ) have two Eyes , the Europeans one , and that all the World besides are starke blinde ; more truely it may be said that the Christians had two Eyes , the Law and Gospell ; the Jewes but one , the Law alone , and all people and Pagans besides sit in darkness and the shadow of death . The Jewes indeed saw Christ presented in a land-scept , and beheld him through the Perspective of faith , *seeing the promises a farre off* . But at this day a Dwarfe-Christian is an overmatch for a gyant Jew in knowledge , as appeareth by our Saviours Riddle , Mat . 11. 11 . *Among them that are borne of women there hath not risen a greater then John the Baptist : Notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdome of Heaven , is greater then he .*

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Which Riddle is thus untyed : John Baptist was the greatest amongst the Children of Women , because other Prophets forelaw Chrit , He saw him ; others spake of Christ , He spake to him , and had the high honour to baptize him with water , by whose spirit he himselfe was baptizet : Yet was he the least in the Kingdome of Heavens ( which properly began after Christs Ascension ) because

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cause though perchance acquainted with the generals thereof, the particulars of the time, place, meanes and manner, were as much conceal'd from him, as clearly revealed unto us. He never knew that *Iudas* should betray Christ; *Caiphas* accuse him, *Peter* deny him, *Pilate* condemn him, *Souldiers* crucifie him, *Nicodemus* embalme him, *Joseph* bury him. These, and many more Circumstances of our Saviours passion, Resurrection and Ascension, now Histories to our Children, were Misteries to *John Baptist*; who, though Christs Harbinger to prepare his way, yet did not live to see his Master to possesse what he had provided for him: Wherefore if *Alexander* the Emperour did count himselfe much indebted to the Gods, that he was borne a Grecian, and not a Barbarian, how thankfull ought we to be to God, who gave us to be borne neither Jewes, nor Pagans, but Christians, since the time of *Reformation*.

9.  
Object.

But this indeed were true, if all things in the Church continued at this time in the same condition of Primative Purity, whereto Christ Reform'd it. But long since, That falling away, foretold by the Apostle, is come to passe, and that man of sinne hath played his part in the Church, therein deforming Manners with Vice, Doctrine with Heresie, Discipline with Superstition. As for any Reformation which since hath happened in *England*, it hath been but partiall and imperfect. King *Henry* the eight brake the Popes necke, but bruised not the least finger of Popery; rejecting his Supremacy, but retaining his superstition in the six Articles. The Reformation under *Edward* the sixth, was like the Reformer, little better then a childe, and he must needs be a weake *Defender of the Faith*, who needed a Lord Protector for himselfe: As Nurses to woe their Children to part from knives, doe suffer them to play with Rattles; so the State then permitted the People (infants in Piety) to please themselves with some frivous points of

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Popery,

Popery, on condition they would forsake the dangerous opinions thereof. As for Queene Elizabeth, her Character is given in that plaine, but true expression, that *she swept the Church of England and left all the dust behind the doore.* Her Successors have gone in the same path, and the same pace with little alteration, and lesse Addition in matters of Moment, save that besides some old errours unamended; many Innovations have broken in upon us, which might be instanced in, were it as safe as it is easie to reckon them up. We therefore desire and expect a *Through Reformation*, to see Christ mounted on his Throne, with his Scepter in his hand, in the Purity of his Ordinances, and we shall grieve and groane untill such a *Reformation*.

10.  
A i/s w.

This objection containes many parts, and must be taken asunder: Some things therein are freely to be granted, and others flatly to be denied, and others warily to be qualified. We freely confess the Deformation by Popery, as also, that the Reforming was by *Henry the eight and Edward the sixth* ( good Prince, of whom I had said, that he dyed too soone, but because he dyed when God would have him ) were but partiall and imperfect. *Withall, we flatly deny that Queene Elizabeth left the dust behinde the Doore, which she cast out on the Dunghill;* whence this uncivill expression was raked up. The Doctrine by her established, and by her Successors maintained in the 39. Articles, if declared, explained and asserted from false Gloses, have all gold, no dust or drosse in them.

11.

Againe, we freely confess that there may be some faults in our Church in matters of practice and Ceremonies, and no wonder if there be, it would be a Miracle if there were not: Besides, there be some Innovations, rather in the *Church then of the Church,* as not chargeable on the Publique Account, but on private mens scores, who are old enough, let them answer for themselves. Religion in *England*, is like the Cloathes of the Isralites,

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Isralites, *Deuteronomie* 29. 5. which for many yeeres together waxed not old. Alas, in some places it is threadbare, may it have a new nappe; in more it is spotted, may it be well scowred; and in all places rent asunder, may it be well mended.

A Through Reformation, we, and all good men doe desire with as strong affections, though perhaps not with so loud a noise, as any whatsoever. The highest clamour doth not alwayes argue the greatest earnestnesse. But with this qualification, that by *Through Reformation*, we meane such a one, whereof we are capable, *pro statu viatorum*, made with all due and Christian moderation: That Arrow is well drawne, that is drawne to the head, but it may over-drawne cleane through the Bow, and so doe no good. There is in like manner a possibility of out-doing, even in the point of Reforming: And therefore how a true Through Reformation may be made, and managed long to continue, by Gods assistance and your patience; I will take in hand to give the true Characters of such who are to be true and proper Reformers.

12.

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First, they must have a lawfull calling thereto: What better deede then to make Brothers friends, and to be an equall Umpire betwixt them? Yet Christ himselfe declin'd the Employment, as out of his Vocation, *Luke* 12. 14. *Who made me a Judge or Divider over you.* Some good duries lye in common to all good men. Whosoever is called a Christian hath a just calling to performe them: 'Tis so farre from being a sinne for any to doe them, that it is a sinne for any to leave them undone. But there be other duties, which God hath impled in, for some particular persons, so that it is a Ryot or Trespass at least for any other to force their Entrance into them: Amongst these Actions, Reformation of Churches is a chief, as of higest Honour, and greatest concernment.

B 2

Now,

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14.

Now, the Supreme power alone, hath a lawfull calling to Reforme a Church in those respective places, wherein it is supreme; Where this supreme power is seated, the Statists of the severall places may judge, the Divine goeth no farther, but to maintaine that where the Supreme power is, there alone is the power of Reformation; as it plainly appeares by the Kings of *Judah* in their Kingdome. Two sorts of Idolatry, the Jewes therein were guilty of: The one Gross, the other Refined. Gross Idolatry against the first Commandement, in worshipping a false God, as *Baal*, and the like. Refined Idolatry, against the second Commandement, in worshipping the true God after false and forbidden manner, 2. *Chronicles* 32. 17. *Neverthelesse the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God onely.* Gross Idolatry found many Reformers, *Asa, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Iotham, Manasseh*, whilet onely two *Iehosaphat* and *Hezekiah*, endeavoured the Reforming of Refined Idolatry, and *Josiah* alone perfected it. In both we may observe, that the Kings were praised for doing so much, or dispraised for doing no more, which plainly proves, that the Reforming of the Church did properly pertaine unto them. God neither mistakes, nor confounds the good Deeds, or Rewards of men; but set the due praises on the true persons; the person that doth well shall be praised: the Prince shall not be commended for the good Deeds of the people, nor the people commended for the good Deeds of the Prince; indeed Gods threatens the common people of Israel, *Leviticus* 26. 23. with Beasts, Warres, and many other Plagues, if they will not be reformed. But we never read that God reproved the people, for not Reforming the Jewish Church from Idolatry, as a Taske belonging to the Supreme power placed over them.

Meane

Meane time meere private men must not be idle, but move in their Spheare till the Supreme power doth Reforme. First, they are dayly to pray to God to inspire those who have power and place with Will and Skill, courageously to begin, constantly to continue, and happily to conclude such a Reformation. Secondly, they are feriously to reforme themselves : He needs not to complaine of too little worke, who hath a little world in himselfe to amend : A good man in Scripture is never called Gods Church ( because that is a collective terme belonging to many ) but is often termed Gods Temple, such a Temple it is lawfull for every private man to Reforme : He must see that the foundation of faith be firme, the Pillars of Patience be strong, the windowes of Knowledge be cleere, the roofe of Perseverance be perfected. Thirdly, he may Reforme *the Church in his house, Philemon 2, carefully looking to his owne Family, Iosua 24. 15. that he and his house may serve the Lord.* But as for the publique Reforming of the Church in generall, he must let it alone as belonging to *the Supreme power, to whom it is appropriated.*

But seeing wee have occasion to speake of lawfull Cal-  
lings, what Calling (may some say) have you to meddle  
with this point above your reach, and without your Com-  
passie ; Who penned your Commission to take such matters  
in hand ? Leave the describing of Reformers Characters to  
such, who have more age, experience, and ability to per-  
forme it.

I am, or should be, most sensible of mine owne weake-  
nessse, being *in a yonge age,* the least of those that dispence the  
Word and Sacraments. Yet have I a calling as good as the  
Church of England could give me : And if she be not a-  
shamed of such a Sonne, I count my selfe honoured with  
such a Mother. And though meere private Christians may  
not intermeddle with publick Reforming of a Church, Gods  
*Answ.* 17  
Prophets.

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Prophets have in all Ages, challenged the priviledge to tell necessary Truths unto the greatest. The Tongue used to be cut out of the Roman Sacrifices, and given unto their Heralds, to shew that freedome of language was allowed them. We are Christs Ambassadors, 2 Corinthians 5.20. and claime the leave to speak Truth with sobernesse; And though I cannot expect my words should be like Nails fastened by the Masters of the Assemblies, Eccl. 12.11. Yet I hope they may prove as Tacks, entred by him that desires to be faithfull and peaceable in Israel.

**18** The second Requisite in Reformers, is Piety. The very Snuffers in the Tabernacle Were made of pure Gold, Exodus 37. 23. They ought to be good themselves, who are to amend others, least that reproofe fall heavie on them, Psalme 50. 16. But unto the ungodly (saith God) Why doest thou preach my lawes, and takest my Covenant in thy mouth? Whereas thou hatest to bee Reformed, and hast cast my words behinde thee. And though sometimes bad men may Reforme others, by vertue of their Office: Yet when it is done by the Office of their Virtue, and efficacy of their goodnesse, it is more gracefull in it selfe, more acceptable to God, and more comfortable to the Doer.

**19** Thirdly, Knowledge in a competent, yea, plentifull measure: Dangerous was the mistake committed by Sir Francis Drake in Eighty Eight; when neglecting to carry the Lanthorne, (as he was commanded) in the darke night, chased five Hulkies of the Dutch Merchants, supposing them to have been his Enemies of the Spaniards. Such and worse Errors may be committed in the Reforming of a Church, good mistaken for bad, and bad mistaken for good, where the light of knowledge is wanting for direction.

**20** *Camdens Eliz. p. 367.* Fourthly, true courage and magnanimity, Reformers need to be armed with a stout spirit Cap à Pie, which are

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are to breake through the front of bad customes long received. Such Customes, as they are bad, are *Ysurpers*, as they are Customes are Tyrants, and will stickle stoutly to stand in their old place. Saint Matthew saith, 27.15. *At the feast the Governour was wont to release unto the people a Prisoner*. Saint Luke saith, 23.17. *Of necessity he must release one unto them at the Feast*. What was but a Curtesie at the first, grew in processe of time to bee a custome, and at last became a necessity. Such customes made necessary by continuance must Reformers expect to encounter, and resolve to remove. O, Coward-lines in a Magistrate is a great sinne! Who would thinke to finde the fearfull marching in the fore-front? and yet in that forlorne hope which goeth to Hell, *Revelations 21.8. see them first named, but the fearfull, the unbelieving and abominable, &c.* so necessary is Christian courage, especially in a Reformer.

Fifthly and lastly, they must be endued with *Christian discretion*, a grace that none ever speak against, but those that wanted it; *A good man will guide his affaires with discretion*, Psalme 112. 5. I must confesse there is a discretion (falsely so called) both carnall in it selfe, and inconsistent with true Zeale, yea, destructive of it. Christ had two Disciples of the same name, the one a true man, the other a Traytor, both *Indaffes*. Wherefore to prevent mistakes, the former is never cited in Scriptures, but with an addition, *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, &c. John 14. 22. Judas the servant of J E S U S C H R I S T, and Brother of James, Jude 1.* In like manner wee, here mentioning Discretion, call it *Christian Discretion*, for difference thereof, that all may know, we meane not that which destroyes Zeale, but that which directs it; not that which quencheth Zeale, but which keepes it in the Chimney, the proper place thereof; not that which makes it lesse lively, but what makes

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makes it more lasting. This Discretion, though last named, is not least needfull in the Reformers of a Church; and must principally appeare in two things; First, the not sparing of the Tares for the Wheats sake. Secondly, the not spoylng the Wheat for the Tares sake.

22. The not sparing the Tares for the Wheats sake. By Tares we understand, not only things unlawfull in a Church, but things unexpedient and unprofitable, which also must be removed. The barren Fig-tree, *Luke 13. 17.* was condemned, not for bearing deadly or dangerous fruit, but none at all. *Cut it downe, why cumbereth it the ground?* Gods Garden ought to bee so well dressed, as to have nothing superfluous, that doth harme that doth no good therein. *Hee that will not worke, neither shall hee eate,* *2 Thessalonians 3. 10.* If such Ceremonies are to be found in our Church, which will not labour, neither needfull in themselves, nor conduced to decency, let them no longer have countenance in the Church, nor maintenance from it.

23. The not spoylng the Wheat for the Tares sake, and letting those things alone which are well ordered already. Yet is there a generation of Anabaptists, in number fewer, I hope, then are reported, yet more I fear then are discovered; people too turbulent to obey, and too tyrannicall to command. If it should come into their hands to reforme, Lord what worke would they make. Very facile, but very fowle is that mistake in the vulgar Translation, *Luke 15. 8.* Instead of *Evertis domum, shee swēpt the house,* 'Tis rendred, *Evertis domum, She overturnd the house.* Such sweeping we must expect from such Spirits, which under pretence to cleanse our Church, would destroy it. The best is, they are so farre from *sittig at the Helme,* that I hope they shall ever be *kept under Hatches.*

24. Now as discretion discovereth it selfe in the matter of Reformation,

Reformation, so also it appeareth in the manner thereof. First, it is to be done with all reverence and respect to the ancient Fathers. These, though they lived neer the Fountain of Religion, yet lived in the Marches of Paganisme; as also in the time wherein the *Mystery of iniquity began to work*, which we hope is now ready to receive the wages. If therefore there be found in their practice any Ceremonies smacking of Paganisme or Popery, and if the same can be justly chalenged to continue in our Church, I plead not for their longer life, but for their decent buriall.

Secondly, with honourable reservation to the memories of our first Reformers. Reverend Cranmer, Learned Ridley, Down right Lattimer, Zealous Bradford, Pious Philpot, patient Hooper, men that had their failings, but worthy in their Generations; *These bare the heat of the day*, indeed, which were burnt to ashes; and though we may write a fairer hand then they, yet they affixed a firmer Seal, that dyed for their Doctrine.

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26.

Lastly, with carefulnesse, not to give any just offence to the Papists. Say not, we need not to feare to offend them, who would confound us. We have so long waited for their conversion, we have almost seene our subversion. Indeed we are forbidden to offend Gods little ones, but not inhibited to offend the Devils great ones. And though S. Paul bids us to give no offence to those that are Without, that is meant of pure Pagans; and therefore the Papists being neither well Within nor well Without, fall not under that precept. For all these Expressions favour more of *Humor* then Holinesse, of *Stomack*, then the Spirit. Though Papists forget their duty to us, let us remember our duty to them; to them, not as Papists, but as professors of Christianity, to their persons, not erronius

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opinions,

opinions, not giving them any just offence. But if they will be offended without cause, be their amends in their own hands. If *Rebeckah* will come to *Isaac*, she shall be wellcome. But in no case shall *Isaac* go back to *Rebeckah*, *Genesis 34.6.* Beware that thou bring not my son thither again.

27.

These five Ingredients must compound effectuall reformers. Where any, or all of these are wanting, a Reformation will either not be made, or not long kept. Witnesse the pretended Reformation, the Papists so much bragge off, in the last of Queen *Mary*, in the University of *Cambridge*, by the *Delegates of Cardinall Poole*. Where nothing of worth was done, but many foolish ceremonies enforced, and the Bones of *Bucer* and *Phagius* burnt. It passeth for the expression of mad man, *to beat the aire*; and it is little better to beat the *earth*. To fight (as they did) against dust and ashes, bodies of men long before buried: except they thought by this similitude of burning dead bodies, to worke in silly people a beliefe of Purgatory fire, tormenting scules deceased. Now when it came into question whether the Ordinances and Decisions of those Reformers should be ingrossed in Parchment, or in paper, a Doctor *Swinborne*, Master of *Clare Hall* gave his opinion, that paper would doe the deed well enough, as being likely to last longer then those decrees should stand in force; as afterward it came to passe, they being all rescinded in the next yeer, being the first of *Queene Elizabeth*.

28.

Two things more must here be well observed. First, that there is a grand difference betwixt founding of a new Church, and reformatio[n] of an old. For the former, Saint *Paul* outstrip all men in the World. The Papists bragge much of King *Edgar*, who is said to have founded as many Monasteries, as there be weekes in the

Fox.

Acts

Monum.

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the yeer. Surely more Churches in *Asia* and *Europe* were built from the ground by *Saint Paul*, who strived to preach the *Gospel*, not where *Christ* was named, lest he should build upon another mans foundation, *Romass 15. 20*. But reforming of Churches is an easier work, as not giving a Church the life but the lastre ; not the birth but the beauty ; either repairing what is defective, or removing what is redundant. Thus we acknowledge *Solomon* the sole founder of the Temple, though *Ioash* repaired it, amending the breaches thereof. *Iotham* enlarged it, adding the beautifull porch thereto ; and *Ezechiah* adorned it, covering the pillars with silver therein.

However, it is worth our obseruing, that Reformers are sometimes ambitious to entitle themselves to be founders, as being covetous of credit, and counting it more honour to make a thing, then to mend it. Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* boasted, *Daniel 4. 30*. Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the Kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ? Whereas *Babylon* was built by *Nimrod*, or (as others say) *Semiramis*, many yeers before *Nebuchadnezzars* cradle was made. Yet he, no doubt, did encrease, strengthen, and beautifie it ; on which title, see how he engrosseth all the glory unto himselfe, as first, and sole founder ! Is not this great Babylon that I have built ?

Let none in like manner brag, that they are now the first Founders of a Church in *England*, built long since therein, time out of minde. We deny and defile such Papists as say that *Augustine* the Monke was the first Apostle of this Island, where the *Gospel* long before had been preached, though not to the *Saxons* our Ancestors, yet to the *Britans* our Predecessors. Yea, having cause to search who first brought Christianity over

29.

30.

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over into *Britanny*, my endeavours have been still at a losse and left at uncertainty. Perchance as God, *Deuteronomie* 34.6. buried the body of *Moses*, That no man knoweth the place of his Sepulchre unto this day, to cut off from the Jewes all occasion of Idolatry; So it seems his wisdom hath suffered the names of the first founders of Religion *Here* to be covered in obscurity, to prevent posterity from being superstitious to their Memories. However, if justly we be angry with the Papists for making the Britifh Church (a tall stripling grown,) to weare swadling cloathes againe; more cause have we to distaffe the pens and preachings of such who make their addresses unto us, as unto pure Pagans where the word is newly to be planted.

In a book<sup>b</sup> Moderne Author tels us a strange story, how the servants of Duke *D. Alva*, seeking for a Hawke they had lost, found a new country in the Navel of *Spaine*, not known before, environed with Mountaines, and peopled with naked Salvages; I should wonder if such a *Terra incognita* could be found in *England*; which (what betwixt the covetousnesse of Landlords and the carefalusnesse of Tenants) is almost measured to an Acre. But if such a place were discovered, I must allow that the Preachers there were the first planters of the Gospel, which in all others places of the kingdom are but the Continuers thereof. I hope Christ hath reaped much goodness long ago, where these, now, new pretend to plint it. And if *England* hath not had a true Church hitherto, I feare it will not have a true Church hereafter.

31. The second thing I commend unto you is this, That a perfect Reformation of any Church in this world may be desired, but not hoped for. Let *Zenophons Cyrus* be King in *Plato's Common-wealth*; and Batchelors wives breed maides children in *Mores Utopia*, whilst Roses grow

grow in their Gardens without prickles, as Saint *Basil* held they did before the fall of *Adam*. These phansies are pleasing and plausible, but the performance thereof unfeisable; and so is the perfect reformation of a Church in this world difficult to bee described, and impossible to be practised. For besides that Sathan will doe his best, or rather his worst to undoe it; Man in this life is not capable of such perfection. Look not to finde that in man out of Paradise, which was not found in man in Paradise, continuaunce in an holy estate. *Martin Luther* was wont to say, he never knew good order in the Church last above fifteen yeares, In the purity thereof; yea, the more perfect the Reformation is, the lesse time it is likely to last. Mans minde being in constant motion, when it cannot ascend higher, will not stand still, but it must decline. I speake not this to dis-hearten men from endeavouring a perfect Reformation, but to keep them from being dis-heartned, when they see the same cannot be exactly observed.

And yet there are some now adayes that talke of a great light, manifested in this age more then ever before. Indeed we Modernes have a mighty advantage of the Ancients, whatsoever was theirs, by Industry, may be ours. The Christian Philosophy of *Justin Martyr*; the constant Sanctity of *Cyprian*; the Catholick faith of *Athanasius*; the Orthodox judgement of *Nazianzen*; the manifold Learning of *Jerome*; the solid Comments of *Chrysostome*; the subtil Controversies of *Augustine*; the excellent Morals of *Gregory*; the humble Devotions of *Bernard*: All contribute themselves to the edification of us, who live in this later Age. But as for any transcendent extraordinary miraculous light, peculiarly conferred on our Times, the worst I wish

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the opinion is this, that it were true. Sure I am that this light must not crosse the Scripture, but cleere the Scripture. So that if it affirmeth any thing contrary to Gods written Word, or enforceth any thing (as necessary to salvation) not exprest in Gods Word; I dare boldly say, That such a light is kindled from Hell.

33.

As for the opinion of Christ's corporall visible Kingdome, to come within few yeares, I will neither peremptorily reject it, nor dare absolutely receive it. Not reject it, lest I come within the compass of the Apostles reprove, *2 Peter 2. 12. Speaking evil of the things they understand not.* Confessing my selfe not to know the reasons of their opinions, who though citing for it much Canonicall Scripture, yet their interpretations thereof may be but Apōcrypha. Nor dare we receive it, not being safe to be familiar with strangers at the first sight; and this Tenent is strange, as set commonly afoot with these few last yeares. I am afraid rather on the contrary of a generall defection. Seeing the word is so slighted, and the guests begin to play with their meat, I feare lest God the master of the feast, will call for the *Voyder*: that so when Christ comes to judgement, he shall finde no faith on the earth. But of things to come, little and doubtfully. If this opinion of Christ's corporall comming very shortly be true, I hope if we live, we shall have our share therein: if otherwise, *Moses* hath no cause to complaine, if dying he commeth not into the earthly Canaan, but into the Heavenly.

34.

Meane time whilst we expect the personall coming of Christ, let us pray for the peaceable coming back of him, who sometimes is called Christ in the Scripture, *the Lords Annoynted.* O the miserable condition of our Land at this time, God hath shewed

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ed the whole World, that *England* hath enough in it selfe to make it selfe happy or unhappy, as it useth or abuseth it. Her homebred wares enough to maintain her, and her homebred warres enough to destroy her, though no foreigne Nation contribute to her Overthrow. Well, whilst others fight for Peace, let us pray for Peace; for Peace on good termes, yea on Gods termes, and in Gods time, when he shall be pleased to give it, and we fitted to receive it. Let us wish both King and Parliament so well, as to wish neither of them better, but both of them best. Even a happy Accommodation.

Only this I will adde, that his Majesty in making his Medals, hath tooke the right course to propagate his promises and most royall intentions to posterity, and raise it to behold the performance thereof. Seeing Princes memories have beeene perpetuated by their Coines, when all other Monuments, Arches, Obelisks, Piramids, Theaters, Trophies, and Triumphs, have yeelded to Time, and been quite forgotten. Yea, tis probable, that the names of some short reigning Emperours had been quite lost, if not found in their Impresses on their Monies, Coynes, having this peculiar priviledge to themselves; that after they had beeene buried many yeares in the ground, when taken up againe, they have life enough to speake the names of those Princes that caused them and their Impressions to be stamped, either to their eternall shame or lasting honour.

35.

To conclude, let us all provide for that perfect Reformation in the world to come; when Christ shall present the Church his Spouse to God his Father, without spot, comming from mans corruption, or Wrinkle, caused by times continuance. When we shall have a

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*new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein shall dwell Righteousnesse.* With judgements reformed from error, wils reformed from wilfulness, affections reformed from mistaking their object, or exceeding their measure; all powers and parts of soule and body reformed from sinne to sanctity. *Let us wait all the dayes of our appointed time till our change come.* Until this time of Reformation. Amen.

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FINIS.

